



section 3

# Land Use

Land use defines a community's physical form and function and provides a framework for all infrastructure related decisions, including transportation, economic development, public utilities, community facilities, parks, and environmental protection. The Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan provides the critical foundation upon which all other elements are based. It includes a Future Land Use Map and related policies and actions to guide growth and development in a more compact and efficient pattern during the coming decades. This element also includes a summary of existing land uses and zoning, future growth projections and development capacity, and annexation and jurisdictional boundaries.

Raleigh's predominant pattern of land use since 1950 has been one of low-density development with residential uses separated from non-residential uses. This suburban development pattern occurred beyond the inner-ring suburbs surrounding downtown Raleigh in tandem with highway expansion and infrastructure extension, and attracted investment away from downtown Raleigh and older neighborhoods. Since 1980, Raleigh's auto-dependent suburban growth has become more prevalent and continued further beyond the Beltline (I-440), the first interstate highway spur around the City. From 1980 to 2014, the City's population nearly tripled from about 150,000 to 440,000. During the same period the City's land area also almost tripled in size from about 55 to 140 square miles. From 1980 to 2000 the City's land areas grew faster than its population, but recent growth and development patterns show that the City's density is increasing.

## Existing Land Use and Zoning

Raleigh's existing land use patterns are illustrated on Map LU-1: Existing Land Use. Low-density single-family development is the dominant land use in Raleigh, representing 34,000 acres, or 34 percent of the city's total land area as of 2015, excluding public right of way. This use, more than any other, drives land consumption patterns in Raleigh and requires continued investment in road capacity and water and sewer infrastructure. The second largest land use category is vacant land, which accounts for 20,000 acres, or 20 percent of the City's total land area. One of Raleigh's major land use challenges will be to shape the development and conservation of this significant available land resource. The third-largest land use is parks and open space, at 12.5 percent of the City's land area; however, nearly half of this amount is located within William B. Umstead State Park. The next largest land uses include institutional uses – State, County, and City government, universities, and hospitals – and multifamily residential. The prevalence of institutional uses highlights the need to carefully coordinate the growth of these large employment sectors. Another substantial land use is commercial, including retail, office, and other uses, which makes up ten percent of Raleigh. The majority of the City's commercial uses are located within mixed-use activity centers – downtown Raleigh, North Hills, and Crabtree Valley – and along commercial corridors. Other land uses in the City include industrial, and infrastructure.

Raleigh's Unified Development Ordinance, which replaced the former development code, divides the entirety of the City's planning jurisdiction into zoning districts, each with their own standards for use, bulk, form, and other site development regulations. Map LU-2 shows Raleigh's existing zoning. As of 2014, nearly

two-thirds of Raleigh's jurisdictional land area is residentially zoned, and approximately 55 percent of this area is zoned for single-family development only. Approximately 25 percent of the City is zoned for a mix of uses, and nearly all the mixed-use zones permit residential development. Of the City's mixed-use zoning districts, only Office Park, which accounts for just 0.5 percent of the mixed-use districts total, does not permit residential use. Approximately 11 percent of the City is zoned for industrial uses but only four percent contains industrial development, as office

and retail uses are also permitted as-of-right within industrially-zoned land. Conditional use zoning, a special tool that allows landowners seeking a rezoning to add conditions over and above the underlying zoning standards, applies to 16 percent of the City's land area. These additional standards are part of the zoning ordinance, and are also kept as individual case files associated with particular rezonings. Overall, the City's Unified Development Ordinance provides the public with greater clarity and simplicity than what was offered with the previous development code.

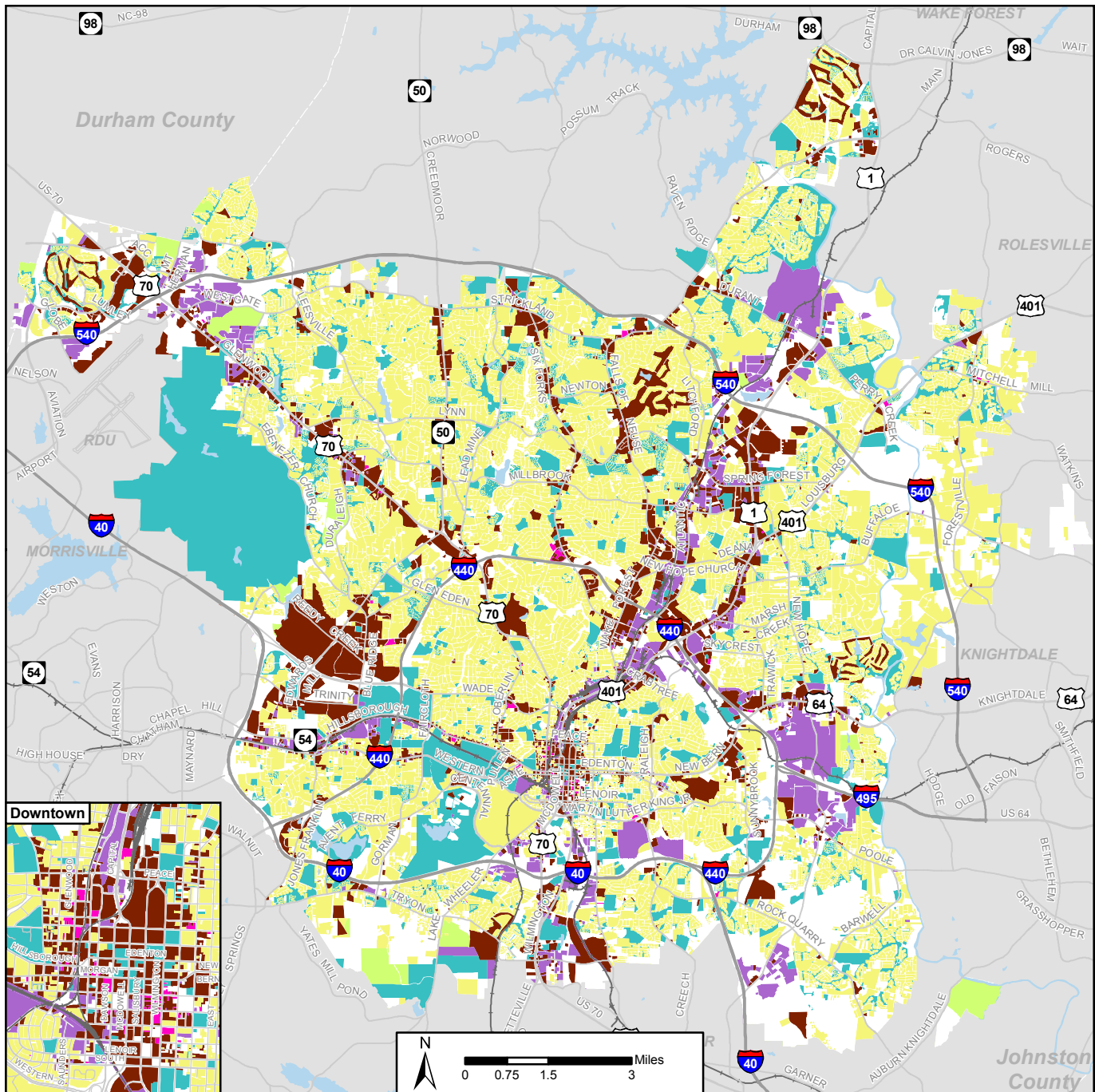
Land Use (within ETJ, excluding right of way)	Parcels	Acres <sup>(2)</sup>	Percentage
Residential-Single-family	88,960	34,409	34.4%
Vacant	8,990	19,656	19.6
Parks, Greenways, Open Space	3,134	12,539	12.5%
Residential - Apartment, Condominium	1,979	6,465	6.5%
Industrial	1,421	5,638	5.6%
Civic	476	5,264	5.3%
Office	1,240	3,779	3.8%
Retail	762	2,371	2.4%
Residential - Townhouse, Duplex	26,449	2,203	2.2%
Residential - Manufactured, Group Living, Social Service	129	1,273	1.2%
Agriculture	14	1,084	1.1%
Mixed Use	115	124	.1%
Other <sup>(3)</sup>	1,591	5,337	5.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>135,260</b>	<b>100,142</b>	<b>100%</b>

*City of Raleigh, Department of City Planning, 2016*

<sup>2</sup> Does not include public right of way. The City's total area, including extraterritorial jurisdiction, covers approximately 115,000 acres

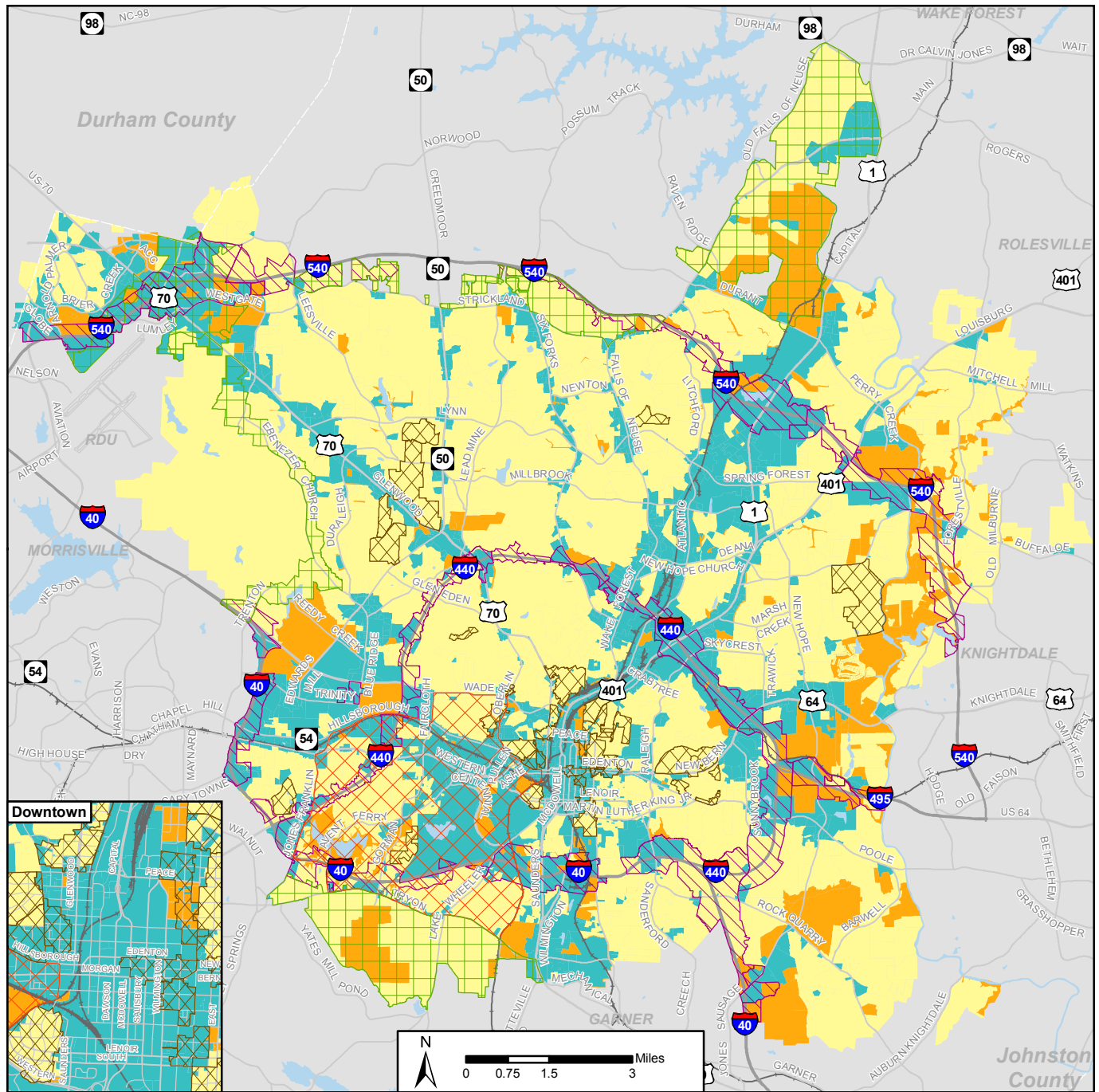
<sup>3</sup> All other use categories

## LU-1: Existing Land Use





## LU-2: Existing Zoning



### Base Districts

- Residential
- Mixed Use\*
- Special

### Overlay Districts

- Environmental
- Corridor
- Character Protection
- Parking

\*Raleigh's Mixed Use Zoning Districts include components for Height and Frontage requirements (not displayed). See Raleigh's Unified Development Ordinance for additional information.

## Annexation and Jurisdictional Boundaries

The City of Raleigh incorporated in 1792 with 400 acres of land, and has expanded its jurisdictional boundaries through annexation. From 1950 to 2000, Raleigh increased its physical size from 6,974 acres to 75,972 acres. In the subsequent 15 years, more than 17,000 acres have been added to the City's limits. Today, Raleigh contains over 93,000 acres of land. This is similar in size to the cities of Atlanta, Philadelphia, and Portland, Oregon. However, Raleigh has the potential to annex an additional 22,305 acres (35 square miles) within its extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ), an area outside of the incorporated limits where the City has been granted land use authority by Wake County for the purposes of providing for the orderly development of areas programmed for future annexation in the short term.

The City's annexation expansion has been accompanied by major water and sewer extensions and completion of the southern Beltline (I-40) and portions of the Northern Wake Expressway (I-540). Based on Wake County's approval to extend water and sewer infrastructure and create a future Urban Service Area (USA), Raleigh also has the potential to annex an additional 18,649 acres beyond its current ETJ. No additional land area is available beyond these limits due to annexation agreements with neighboring jurisdictions that have essentially assigned all of Wake County outside of existing and planned water supply watersheds into urbanizing areas. Therefore, Raleigh has the ability to annex over 41,000 acres (64 square miles), for an ultimate city size of approximately 134,700 acres or 210 square miles. Similarly-sized cities include Columbus, Ohio and Tucson, Arizona.

Between 1990 and 2010, Raleigh averaged an annexation rate of approximately 1,900 acres per year. At that rate, it would take approximately 22 years to absorb the remaining 41,000 acres of land area with annexation potential. This timeframe

generally corresponds to the time horizon of this Comprehensive Plan. However, the rate of annexation slowed significantly following changes in 2012 to state law regarding annexation. Moreover, since this Comprehensive Plan is based on the desire for a more compact and walkable development pattern with residential, retail, services, and jobs located more closely together, the land available for development should last much longer than 22 years. Please refer to A.3 'Annexation, ETJ and USA' in the Policies and Action section of this Land Use Element for related recommendations related to annexation. For policies related to regional and inter-jurisdiction cooperation, please refer to Element L: 'Regional and Inter-Jurisdictional Coordination'.

Raleigh's desired future land use patterns are shown on the Future Land Use Map, which provides the land use foundation for this Comprehensive Plan. The Future Land Use Map indicates the intended distribution and intensity of land uses over the next 20 years to achieve the following objectives:

- *Provide greater land use predictability and transparency;*
- *Incorporate recommended land uses from area plans;*
- *Use a nomenclature that is reasonably compatible with the Wake County Comprehensive Plan and the plans for adjacent jurisdictions;*
- *Advance Raleigh's Vision and Themes, as described in the Framework Element; and,*
- *Create a logical framework for future zoning and development.*

The Future Land Use Map is part of the adopted Comprehensive Plan and carries the same legal weight as the Plan document itself. The Future Land Use Map uses color-coded categories to express public policy on future land uses across the City. Its land use designations have been drawn based on existing and desired development

patterns, streets, parcel lines, environmental features, and other logical boundaries. For guidance on how to use the Future Land Use Map and policies related to its interpretation and relation to zoning evaluations, please refer to A.1 ‘Future Land Uses’ of this Land Use Element.

## Primary Land Use Issues

The land use element provides guidance to enhance existing neighborhoods throughout the City, which requires an emphasis on conservation in some neighborhoods and revitalization in others. It also provides guidance to create vibrant, new walkable neighborhoods; reduce auto-dependency; increase the viability of transit, walking, and biking through design and management of land uses; accommodate density while respecting desired neighborhood character and providing usable open space; increase mixed-use development; focus development close to already developed areas rather than in greenfield locations further out; focus development within designated centers and transit corridors; coordinate development so that it fits-in with existing patterns; and provide for ways to ensure compatibility of land uses while still accommodating the uses that make Raleigh a thriving residential and employment center within the Triangle region.

By 2030, Raleigh is projected to grow by approximately 150,000 people. It has a remaining growth area of about 64 square miles based on current annexation agreements. The City is poised to continue a high level of population growth because of its positive quality of life factors: a location for high-tech jobs; a highly-educated population; excellent universities and quality public school system; the diversity of its housing; relatively mild winters; and a revitalizing downtown. However, the last 50 years of suburban growth and new global issues—energy insecurity and climate change—have created a cumulative challenge of interrelated land use issues that Raleigh will need to address over the coming years. The following are the main land use issues

addressed in this Land Use Element:

- *Key corridors in gateway locations have become over-developed for commercial use, becoming lined with under-performing strip retail and services, creating the need and opportunity for mixed-use redevelopment;*
- *Annexation and utility extensions have led to sprawling and leapfrog development patterns, even as lands inside the City’s extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) provide for ample development capacity;*
- *Lack of coordination between land use and transportation planning and investment has led to increased congestion and an underperforming transit system;*
- *Though recent development patterns have improved bikeability and walkability in the City, most Raleigh residents live in neighborhoods where jobs, goods, services, and recreation are not walkable or bikeable, even if these resources are close by, due to the lack of integration between uses;*
- *Proposed regional rail and local bus rapid transit stations need appropriate planning and zoning in place to ensure transit-supportive development patterns;*
- *Growth, changing demographics, and an evolving economy require a greater diversity of housing choices in both infill locations and in new neighborhoods;*
- *Demand for denser and more intense development in infill locations and near established neighborhoods raises issues of land use compatibility;*
- *A shift to more environmentally sustainable building practices is necessary to reduce the City’s air and water pollution and its demand for energy and water; and,*
- *The City’s economic future requires additional development opportunities for research and development firms, institutions, and hospitals.*

As described in the Framework chapter, Raleigh's Vision for 2030 is structured to address these land use issues through six vision themes or citywide goals. By concentrating growth into mixed-use centers and creating more accessible communities citywide, Raleigh will help meet its goal for **Economic Prosperity and Equity**. Through a broader range of housing-related land use policies and programs, Raleigh plans to meet its goal for **Expanding Housing Choices**. Through more compact forms of development and new rural and open space policies, Raleigh will meet its overarching goal of **Managing Our Growth**. By implementing a citywide and regional transit system that is connected with pedestrian and bike-friendly communities, Raleigh will be closer to its goal of effectively **Coordinating Land Use and Transportation**. Through citywide policies and programs for green building, green infrastructure, and resource conservation and preservation, Raleigh will become a national leader with its **Greenprint Raleigh** paradigm. Lastly, through a series of ordinance and subdivision changes to accommodate a smart growth model of planning and development, Raleigh will reach its goal of **Growing Successful Neighborhoods and Communities**.

The policies and actions of the Land Use Element appear in the next section. To track the efficiency of the City's policies, numbers that relate to the City's six vision themes are used throughout the policy section as follows:

- 1. Economic Prosperity and Equity**
- 2. Expanding Housing Choices**
- 3. Managing Our Growth**
- 4. Coordinating Land Use and Transportation**
- 5. Greenprint Raleigh**
- 6. Growing Successful Neighborhoods and Communities**



## 3.1 Future Land Uses

Raleigh is a growing city both in terms of the number of residents and jobs and its physical growth and land area. Raleigh's Future Land Use Map (Map LU-3) builds upon the City's existing land use patterns and provides a generalized guide for development and conservation decisions. The Future Land Use Map is further defined below. For guidance on the application and use of the Future Land Use Map as it relates to zoning applications, see the text box entitled "Evaluating Zoning Proposals and Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan" later in this section.

- *The Future Land Use Map is a generalized depiction of intended uses in the horizon year of the Comprehensive Plan, roughly 15 years in the future. It is not an "existing land use map," although in many cases future uses in an area may be the same as those that exist today.*
- *The Future Land Use Map is not a zoning map. Whereas zoning maps are parcel-specific, and establish detailed requirements for setbacks, height, use, parking, and other attributes, the land use categories of the Future Land Use Map recommend a range of potentially appropriate land uses and intensities. By definition, the Future Land Use Map is a guide to future zoning decisions. Related, the Future Land Use Map is not intended to be referenced as part of the site plan review process, since the zoning regulations set forth the permitted uses for particular parcels.*
- *Streets and public rights-of-way are not an explicit land use category on the Future Land Use Map. Within any given area, the streets that pass through are assigned the same designation as the adjacent uses.*

## Definition of Future Land Use Categories

Raleigh's Future Land Use Map contains 19 color-coded categories that express public policy on future land uses throughout the City as described below:

### ■ Rural Residential (1 unit per acre and under)

This category is generally mapped over areas zoned "R1" (or areas in the ETJ/ USA with rural residential land use designations and rural County zoning) where intensification to more urban uses is not expected due to watershed constraints and existing fragmented parcel patterns. Rural Residential areas are generally developed with "ranchettes," hobby farms, estates, large-lot subdivisions, or conservation subdivisions with large common open space areas. Civic uses such as churches and police or fire stations are also consistent with this category. The intent of this designation is to preserve the rural character of these areas and achieve compatible resource conservation objectives such as watershed conservation and tree protection. Gross densities in these areas would be one unit per acre or less, although clustered housing on large tracts could result in pockets of more densely developed land.

### ■ Low Density Residential (1-6 units per acre)

This category encompasses most of Raleigh's single-family detached residential neighborhoods, corresponding roughly to the R-2, R-4, and R-6 zoning districts (but excluding parks within these districts). It also identifies vacant or agricultural lands—in the city and in the county—where single-family residential use is planned over the next 20 years. Smaller lots, townhouses and multifamily dwellings would only be appropriate as part of a conservation subdivision resulting in a significant open space set-aside. As defined in the zoning regulations, manufactured home parks could also be appropriate in this land use category.



### ■ **Moderate Density Residential** (6-14 units per acre)

This category applies to some of the city's older single-family residential neighborhoods, along with newer small lot single-family subdivisions and patio home developments. Other housing types including townhouses and multifamily dwellings would be consistent with this designation as long as an overall gross density not exceeding 14 units per acre was maintained. Gross density in these areas would be 6 to 14 units per acre. Corresponding zoning districts are R-6 and R-10, or RX conditioned to limit density. In some instances, small-scale commercial uses allowed in RX districts may be appropriate. Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element policies should be consulted for additional guidance.

### ■ **Medium Density Residential**

This category applies to garden apartments, townhomes, condominiums, and suburban style apartment complexes. It would also apply to older neighborhoods with a mix of single-family and multi-family housing. RX zoning with a three or four story height limit is appropriate for these areas. In some instances, small-scale commercial uses allowed in RX districts may be appropriate. Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element policies should be consulted for additional guidance.

### ■ **High Density Residential**

This category would apply to apartment buildings and condominiums. Conforming zoning would consist of the RX district with a height limit of five to 12 stories, depending on location and context. Other zoning districts which permit multifamily housing, appropriately conditioned, could be conforming as well. Although this is a residential zone, ground floor retail uses (with upper story housing) may be appropriate under certain circumstances. Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element policies should be consulted for additional guidance.

## Mixed Use Categories

### ■ **Office & Residential Mixed Use**

This category is applied primarily to frontage lots along major streets where low-density residential uses are no longer appropriate, as well as office parks and developments suitable for a more mixed-use development pattern. This category encourages a mix of residential and office use. Retail not ancillary to employment and/or residential uses is discouraged so that retail can be more appropriately clustered and concentrated in retail and mixed-use centers at major intersections and planned transit stations. OX is the closest corresponding zoning district. Heights would generally be limited to four stories when near neighborhoods, with additional height allowed for larger sites and locations along major corridors where adjacent uses would not be adversely impacted. Higher-impact uses such as hotels and hospitals are not contemplated or recommended in this land use category except as limited uses in appropriate locations.

### ■ **Neighborhood Mixed Use**

This category applies to neighborhood shopping centers and pedestrian-oriented retail districts. The service area of these districts is generally about a one mile radius or less. Typical uses would include corner stores or convenience stores, restaurants, bakeries, supermarkets (other than superstores/centers), drug stores, dry cleaners, video stores, small professional offices, retail banking, and similar uses that serve the immediately surrounding neighborhood. Residential and mixed-use projects with upper story housing are also supported by this designation. Where residential development complements commercial uses, it would generally be in the Medium density range.

NX is the most appropriate zoning district for these areas. Heights would generally be limited to three stories, but four or five stories could be appropriate in walkable areas with pedestrian-oriented businesses. Buildings at those heights should include appropriate transitions to any lower-density adjacent areas and be accompanied by a pedestrian-friendly relationship to the public realm.

### ■ Community Mixed Use

This category applies to medium-sized shopping centers and larger pedestrian-oriented retail districts such as Cameron Village. Typical commercial uses include large-format supermarkets, larger drug stores, department stores and variety stores, clothing stores, banks, offices, restaurants, movie theaters, hotels, and similar uses that draw from multiple neighborhoods. Development intensities could be higher than in Neighborhood Mixed Use areas, with mid-rise buildings as well as low rise buildings. Where residential development occurs, ground floor retail would be encouraged and minimum building heights might be applied in transit-rich areas. Heights would generally be in the three-to-five-story range, although additional height up to 12 stories would be appropriate in TOD areas and at the core of mixed-use centers.

CX is the primary corresponding zoning district for these areas. Appropriate urban form standards for frontage should be applied, recognizing that some of the designated areas are established neighborhood “main streets” and others are suburban auto-oriented shopping plazas or strip centers fronting on high-volume arterial roadways. For both this category and Neighborhood Mixed Use, greater height should include appropriate transitions and be accompanied by a pedestrian-friendly relationship to the public realm.

### ■ Regional Mixed Use

This category applies to the Triangle Town Center area, the Brier Creek area, and the North Hills/Midtown and Crabtree Centers. The intent is to identify the major retail and service hubs that draw customers from across the city. These areas may include high-density housing, office development, hotels, and region-serving retail uses such as department stores and specialty stores. These areas would typically be zoned CX. Heights could be as tall as 12 to 20 stories in core locations, but should taper down to meet the context of surrounding development. As in other mixed-use areas, taller buildings should be accompanied by enhanced pedestrian amenities.

### ■ Central Business District

This category applies to the Raleigh Central Business District, and is intended to enhance Downtown Raleigh as a vibrant mixed-use urban center. The category recognizes the area’s role as the heart of the city, supporting a mix of high-intensity office, retail, housing, government, institutional, visitor-serving, cultural, and entertainment uses. Multiple zoning districts might apply within the CBD, corresponding to the different character and vision for its various neighborhoods, with DX being the primary district for the mixed-use core of downtown. Heights in the downtown could reach as high as 40 stories in the core, but would taper down to meet the adjacent neighborhoods at a height of three to four stories.

## Employment Categories

### ■ Office/ Research and Development

This category identifies major employment centers where housing is not considered an appropriate future land use. Principal uses are office parks, free-standing office buildings or corporate headquarters, banks, research and development uses, hotels, and ancillary service businesses and retail uses that support the office economy. This category can also apply in appropriate locations to office-industrial hybrids such as light fabrication and assembly ancillary to an R&D use, flex parks, and office-distribution combinations. OP is the most appropriate zoning district for this category, although OX or IX could be used if conditioned to restrict housing development.

### ■ Business and Commercial Services

This category is for higher-impact or “heavy” commercial activities that would not be compatible with residential uses, or that have locational needs (such as frontage along freeways, expressways, or other major streets) that are not conducive to mixed-use development. Examples would include auto dealerships, auto repair and service businesses, lumberyards, nurseries, contractor suppliers, warehousing, printers, truck stops, distribution centers, and other uses that are quasi-industrial or highway-oriented in character. These areas would generally be zoned IX. Housing would be limited, but live-work units or housing combined with an employment-generating ground floor could be permitted in certain locations.

### ■ General Industrial

This category designates areas programmed for industrial land uses, including manufacturing, concrete plants and other extractive industries, junkyards/scrap yards, and outdoor storage uses. These uses tend to have greater impacts than the business and commercial service uses, and may require additional buffering or separation from nearby uses. Some of these uses are dependent on rail for freight movement, and others require convenient access to freeways or other major streets for truck deliveries and shipments. Railyards, power plants, and similar uses are also included in this designation. Most of these areas should be zoned IH to prevent use conflicts with housing or retail.

## Public and Institutional Categories

### ■ Public Facilities

This category identifies large publicly owned non-park properties, including public schools, city facilities (such as libraries, fire stations, public works yards, etc.), stadiums, state government facilities, the fairgrounds, and federal government facilities (postal distribution centers, etc.). Such sites are identified on the Future Land Use Map if they cover more than about two acres.

### ■ Institutional

This category identifies land and facilities occupied by colleges and universities, large private schools, hospitals and medical complexes, religious organizations, and similar institutions. Smaller institutional uses such as churches are generally not mapped unless they are sites that are more than two acres in size. Institutional properties may be public or private. While institutional uses are permitted in a variety of zoning districts, large institutions in a campus setting such as universities and major hospitals are appropriately zoned CMP.

## Parks, Open Space, and Resource Conservation Categories:

### Public Parks and Open Space

This category applies to permanent open space intended for recreational or resource conservation uses. Included are neighborhood, community, and regional parks and greenways. Greenways include both existing greenway property as well as potential greenway corridors designated in the Comprehensive Plan and subject to regulation under the City code. Also included are publicly-owned lands that are managed for watershed protection, resource conservation, hazard prevention, and the protection of important visual resources. Land with this designation is intended to remain as open space in perpetuity. Where potential greenway corridors are mapped (typically as buffers to streams identified in the City's Greenway Master Plan), greenway dedication will be subject to the City's code requirements during the subdivision and site planning process.

### Private Open Space

This category includes open space that is privately owned and maintained, including private golf courses and country clubs, cemeteries, open space easements, land zoned Conservation Management, and land that should be retained in its natural state to protect public health and safety (such as floodways and steep slopes), preserve sensitive or important ecological resources (such as important tree stands), or provide a public benefit (such as watershed protection). Land with this designation may have a limited amount of development potential, and may be used for agriculture, forestry, pasture, etc. but the overall intent is to protect its open and undeveloped character through the horizon year of the Plan.

## Critical Areas:

### Critical Areas

The Critical Areas overlay is mapped over lands that are environmentally sensitive and merit preservation and protection from development. The Critical Areas overlay encompasses publicly and privately owned land mostly encumbered by the 100-year floodplain. Some of this area is currently zoned Conservation Management; other portions are zoned for a wider range of use. The use of an overlay on top of another designation recognizes that while preservation is the long term goal, private landowners are entitled to a productive use of the property as allowed by the underlying zone district until such time as the appropriate steps can be taken to protect these resources.

## Special Study Areas:

### Special Study Area

The Future Land Use Map includes another category to identify areas where the future land use pattern has yet to be determined. These areas are outlined with a dashed line, labeled, and in some cases left “blank” (white) on the map, indicating the precise land use pattern was still under study at the time of Plan adoption. The text of the plan provides further detail.

This designation is used on large sites where land use planning studies incorporating focused community outreach are necessary to determine a preferred land use pattern. Examples include areas such as active rock quarries, landfills, large tracts outside of the City's current jurisdiction but in its future urban services area, and publicly-owned sites of particular importance. These areas should be the subject of Area Planning Studies as described under N.4 ‘Small Area Studies’ in the Element N: ‘Implementation’ element.

## Heights in Mixed Land Use Categories

Table LU-2 sets forth the preferred building height ranges for the multifamily and mixed use land use categories. This table should be used as a guide to determining appropriate building heights when property is rezoned using one of the mixed-use districts in the Unified Development Ordinance. It is not intended to supersede the height permitted on any property under its current zoning. Appropriate building heights will vary based on context, and the appropriate height provided through future zoning actions should be determined based on site-specific characteristics and with reference to the relevant Comprehensive Plan Policies. The table defines recommended height according to one of three contexts: Edge, Core/Transit, or General. A large development site (more than 30 acres, collectively) may have a Core/Transit condition near the center of the property, an Edge condition where building heights taper to meet surrounding context, and a General condition in between. The areas are defined as:

- *Edge areas are located within 150 feet of a low- to moderate-density residential area zoned for three-story development. Permitted height in edge areas should generally match the surrounding area and not exceed 4 stories when located directly adjacent to existing three story structures. See table LU-2 for more specific guidance based on FLUM categories.*
- *Core/Transit areas refer to areas located within the core of a mixed-use center of about 30 acres or more; within a quarter mile of a fixed-guideway transit stop or bus rapid transit station; or fronting along a corridor programmed for high-capacity, frequent bus transit. In employment areas, taller buildings may also be contemplated on large sites with adequate buffers from low-scale areas, such as Highwoods.*
- *General areas refer to locations not corresponding to the above guidelines. Buildings in these areas can be taller than in edge locations, but should not be as tall as core locations.*

When a conflict exists between Edge and Core/Transit locations, such as when a small site is adjacent to both a transit corridor and a low-density residential area, the area will be considered a General area. Existing code requirements ensure that the site will transition to meet the Edge area.

While this guidance regarding height is generally applicable, adopted area plans may provide further definition of these three areas or recommend particular height categories.

### Policy LU 1.1 Future Land Use Map Purpose

The Future Land Use Map and associated Comprehensive Plan policies shall be used to guide zoning, ensure the efficient and predictable use of land capacity, guide growth and development, protect public and private property investments from incompatible land uses, and efficiently coordinate land use and infrastructure needs. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6) ●

### Policy LU 1.2 Future Land Use Map and Zoning Consistency

The Future Land Use Map shall be used in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan policies to evaluate zoning consistency including proposed zoning map amendments and zoning text changes. See Text Box: Evaluating Zoning Proposals and Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. (3, 4, 5, 6) ●

### Policy LU 1.3 Conditional Use District Consistency

All conditions proposed as part of a conditional use district (CUD) should be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6) ●



Table LU-2 Recommended Height Designations

Category	Core/Transit	General	Edge
Medium Density Residential	Min. of 2 stories Max. of 5 stories	Max. of 4 stories	3 stories
High Density Residential	Min. of 2 stories Max. of 12 stories	Max. of 5 stories	Max. of 4 stories
Neighborhood Mixed Use	Min. of 2 stories Max. of 5 stories	Max. of 4 stories	3 stories
Community Mixed Use	Min. of 2 stories Max. of 12 stories	Max. of 5 stories	Max. of 4 stories
Regional Mixed Use	Min. of 2 stories Max. of 20 stories	Max. of 7 stories	Max. of 4 stories
Central Business District	Min. of 3 stories Max. of 40 stories	Max. of 12 stories	Max. of 4 stories
Office & Residential Mixed Use	Min. of 2 stories Max. of 7 stories	Max. of 5 stories for office; max. of 4 stories residential and/or mixed use	Max. of 4 stories
Office/Research Development	Min. of 2 stories Max. of 12 stories	Max. of 7 stories	Max. of 4 stories

**Action LU 1.1 Reserved****Action LU 1.2 Reserved****Action LU 1.3 Special Study Area Plans**

Undertake detailed land use planning in those areas designated as Special Study Areas on the Future Land Use Map before approval of development proposals or rezonings in the areas. Engage the public in the planning process.

**Action LU 1.4 Future Land Use Map Maintenance and Revision**

Maintain the currency of the Future Land Use Map through periodic reevaluation and revision of the map based on analysis of growth and development needs and trends, small area studies, and special area studies.

**Action LU 1.5 Reserved****Action LU 1.6 Reserved**

## Evaluating Zoning Proposals and Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

The Future Land Use Map is based on the policies and assumptions contained in the Comprehensive Plan and the forecasted growth for the City and region. The Future Land Use Map shows the general land use recommended and corresponds to a range of potentially appropriate land uses and intensities within each land use category.

While the Future Land Use Map will influence future zoning, it does not alter current zoning or affect the right of property owners to use the land for its purpose as zoned at the time of this Plan's adoption. The Future Land Use Map will not be referenced as part of the review of development plans, including site plans and subdivisions.

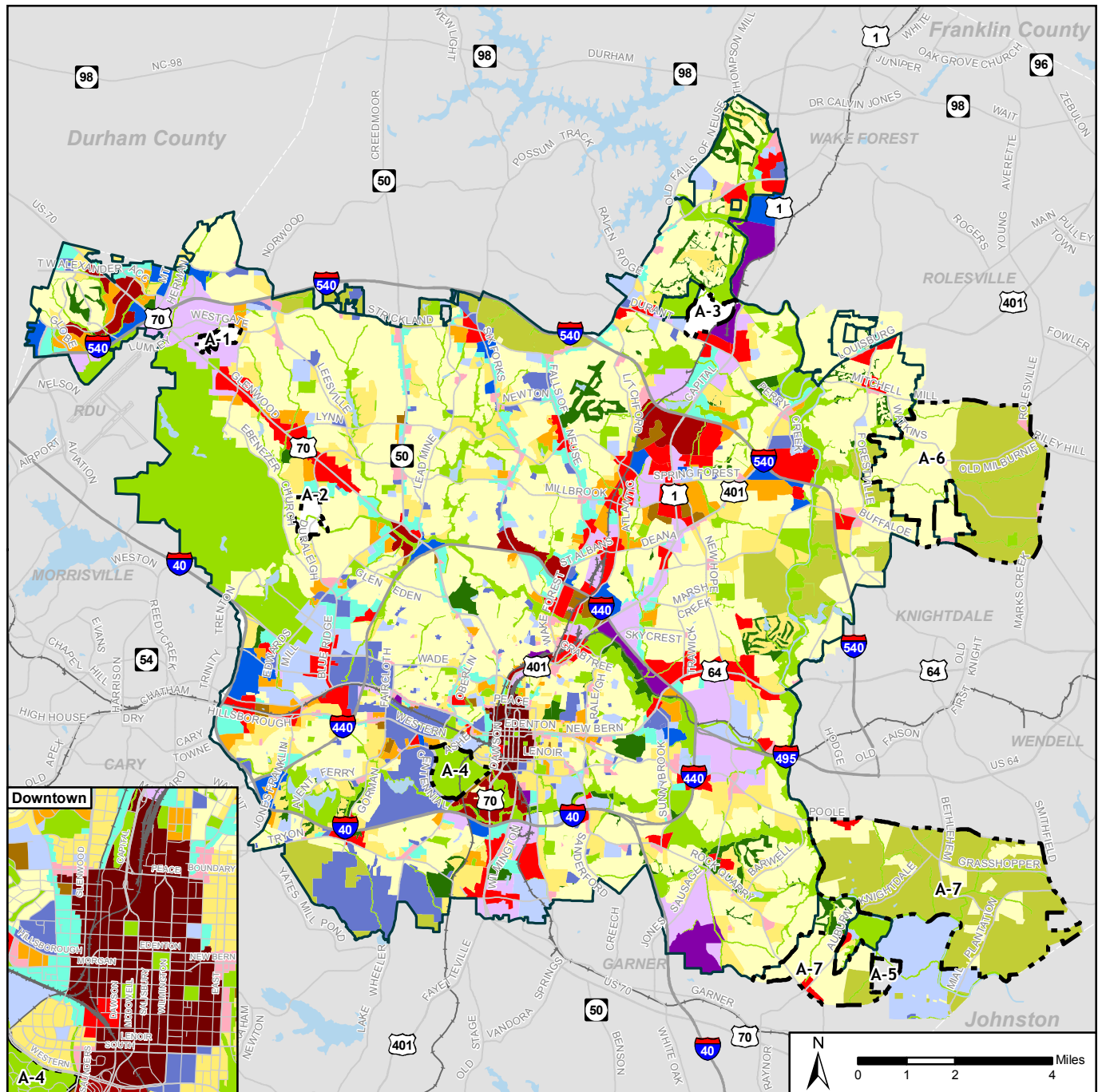
The designation of an area with a particular land use category does not mean that the most intense zoning district described in the land use categories is automatically recommended. A range of densities and intensities applies within each category, and the use of different zoning districts within each category should reinforce this range and be based on infrastructure capacity, community character, protection of common open space, and prevailing density and lot size in the surrounding area. The Future Land Use Map documents the general recommended future use for each designated area. However, other types of uses may be compatible with the designated use and deemed to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. For example, a school or attached house (duplex) could be found to be in conformance with the plan designation of Low-Density Residential.

The future land use categories should not be interpreted to support nor preclude developments without consideration of the policies and intent of the Comprehensive Plan.

Site considerations relating to topography, soils, or hydrology are also important in establishing the specific use and intensity of a particular parcel on the Future Land Use Map. Similarly, the presence of adequate streets, schools, parks, and other community facilities should be assured before a rezoning is approved that would otherwise be in conformance with the Future Land Use Map. Determination of the conformance of a proposed use or zone with the Comprehensive Plan should include consideration of the following questions:

- *Is the proposal consistent with the vision, themes, and policies contained within the Comprehensive Plan?*
- *Is the use being considered specifically designated on the Future Land Use Map in the area where its location is proposed?*
- *If the use is not specifically designated on the Future Land Use Map in the area where its location is proposed, would the benefits of its establishment to the owner, neighbors, surrounding community, and public interest outweigh the detriments, and would the proposed uses under the new zoning adversely alter the recommended land use and character of the area?*
- *Will community facilities and streets be available at City standards to serve the use proposed for the property?*
- In this Element and throughout the Plan, Key Policies used to evaluate zoning consistency are noted as such with an orange dot.

# LU-3: Future Land Use



Map created 3/17/2017 by the  
City of Raleigh Department of City Planning



## 3.2 City-Wide Growth

Raleigh has expanded and grown dramatically over the last 20 years based on an auto-dependent land use pattern of separated land uses. Due to rising infrastructure costs, diminishing land resources, local environmental impacts, and global climate change, Raleigh is now committed to a smart growth pattern of development for its future and desires to be a model “sustainable city.” Raleigh’s citywide growth policies seek to guide development and redevelopment and promote more compact development, walkable neighborhoods, and transit-accessible corridors to use land efficiently, increase connectivity, lower vehicle miles traveled, and improve air quality.

### Policy LU 2.1 Placemaking

Development within Raleigh’s jurisdiction should strive to create places, streets, and spaces that in aggregate meet the needs of people at all stages of life, are visually attractive, safe, accessible, functional, inclusive, have their own distinctive identity, and maintain or improve local character. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

### Policy LU 2.2 Compact Development

New development and redevelopment should use a more compact land use pattern to support the efficient provision of public services, improve the performance of transportation networks, preserve open space, and reduce the negative impacts of low intensity and non-contiguous development. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6) ●



### Policy LU 2.3 Open Space Preservation

Development plans that use only a portion of the overall site should be used to achieve open space preservation in those areas of the City planned for rural residential land uses on the Future Land Use Map. (1, 2, 3, 5) ●

### Policy LU 2.4 Large Site Development

Developments on large sites should set aside land for future parks and community facilities to help meet identified needs for public amenities and services and to offset the impacts of the development. (1, 2, 5) ●

### Policy LU 2.5 Healthy Communities

New development, redevelopment, and infrastructure investment should strive to promote healthy communities and active lifestyles by providing or encouraging enhanced bicycle and pedestrian circulation, access, and safety along roads near areas of employment, schools, libraries, and parks. (4, 5, 6) See Element I: ‘Urban Design’ for additional policies and actions related to pedestrian-friendly design. ●

## Policy LU 2.6 Zoning and Infrastructure Impacts

Carefully evaluate all amendments to the zoning map that significantly increase permitted density or floor area to ensure that impacts to infrastructure capacity resulting from the projected intensification of development are adequately mitigated or addressed. (3, 4) ●

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### Action LU 2.1 Future Studies in High-Density Areas

As necessary, undertake detailed studies and plans for growth centers, mixed-use centers, and transit station areas (rail or bus transfer nodes) to identify areas appropriate for higher-density mixed-use development.

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### Action LU 2.2 Reserved

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### Action LU 2.3 Reserved

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### Action LU 2.4 Reserved

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### Action LU 2.5 Reserved

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### Action LU 2.6 Reserved

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## 3.3 Annexation, Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction and Urban Service Area

Annexation is the incorporation of land into an existing city. Historically, North Carolina provided annexation authority to municipalities to provide for their orderly growth and expansion over time. Between 2011 and 2013 the North Carolina General Assembly substantially revised the annexation statutes, effectively eliminating city-initiated annexations. Future annexations will be petitioned by landowners, often to obtain services from the City's public utilities. (See text box: North Carolina Law on Annexation).

Currently, Raleigh encompasses approximately 93,000 acres of land within its city limits and has an additional 22,000 acres within its extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ). Beyond its current ETJ, Raleigh has 19,000 acres within its Urban Service Area (USA). No additional land area is available beyond these limits due to annexation agreements with neighboring jurisdictions that have essentially carved out all of Wake County except protected watersheds into urbanizing areas. Therefore, Raleigh has approximately 41,000 acres available for future annexation and expansion. As stated below, Raleigh's annexation policies focus on managing annexation outside of the ETJ to provide for more compact and orderly growth and to better phase land development with infrastructure, public services, and facilities within the ETJ prior to annexation and urban expansion into the Urban Service Area.

Map LU-4 illustrates areas available for future annexation, both within the City's ETJ and outside the ETJ but within the USA. The map also shows watershed lands within the ETJ that the City has agreed never to annex, even though the City exercises land use authority over these areas. Since 2013, Raleigh's expansion via annexation, both within and outside of its ETJ, is a result of annexation petitions from landowners wishing to connect to the City's utility infrastructure. Annexation and utilities extension policies are closely related. Policy guidance on utility extension can be found under G.2 'Utility Extensions' in Element G: 'Public Utilities'.

### Policy LU 3.1 Zoning of Annexed Lands

The zoning designation for newly annexed land into the City of Raleigh shall be consistent with the Future Land Use Map. In those cases where the annexed lands are within a special study area (as shown on the Future Land Use Map), a special study will need to be completed prior to zoning and development of the property. (1, 3, 5) ●

### Policy LU 3.2 Location of Growth

The development of vacant properties should occur first within the City's limits, then within the City's planning jurisdiction, and lastly within the City's USAs to provide for more compact and orderly growth, including provision of conservation areas. For more detail, see:

- Resolution 2008-460
- Resolution 2009-22

Both of the above resolutions relate to annexation policy beyond the ETJ. (1, 3, 5)

### Policy LU 3.3 Annexation Agreement

Support and honor current annexation agreements between the City of Raleigh and neighboring jurisdictions that essentially apportion the remaining unincorporated land within Wake County. Renew agreements as needed. (3)



#### Policy LU 3.4 Infrastructure Concurrency

The City of Raleigh should only approve development within newly annexed areas or Raleigh's ETJ when the appropriate transportation, water, stormwater, and wastewater infrastructure is programmed to be in place concurrent with the development. (3,6)

#### Policy LU 3.5 Watershed Management

When the City annexes land that includes designated watershed supply areas, development of these lands should be managed to minimize impervious surface cover and protect the quality of the water supply. (3, 5, 6)

*See also Element L: 'Regional and Inter-Jurisdictional Coordination' for additional policies and actions related to annexation and management of land development within the region.*

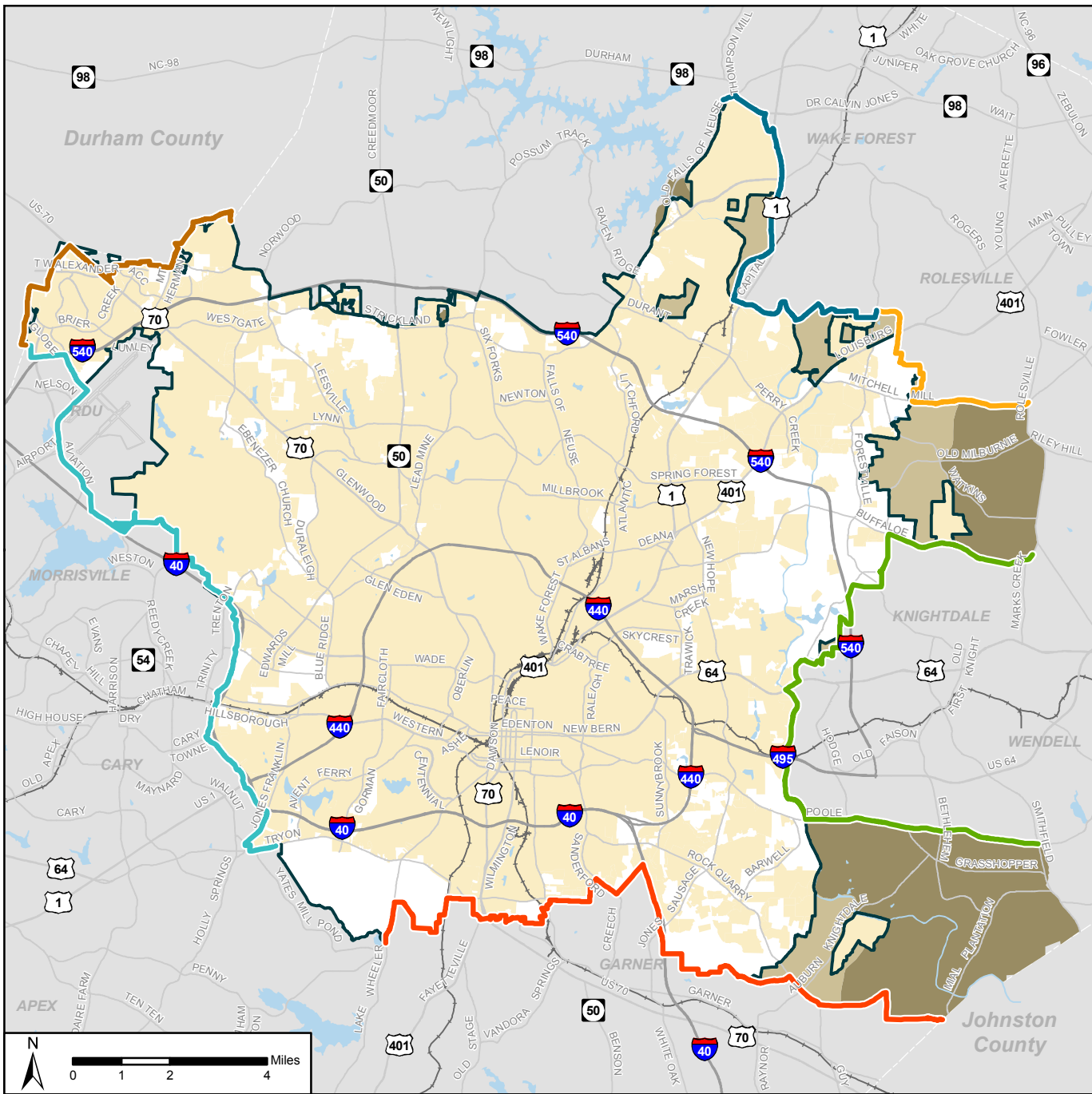
## North Carolina Law on Annexation

There are three methods of annexation:

- City-initiated;
- By petition of property owners ("voluntary annexation");
- By act of the General Assembly.

Due to recent policy changes by the North Carolina General Assembly, "voluntary" annexation is the most prevalent method of annexation into the City of Raleigh. For city-initiated annexations, the state statutes require a referendum of voters in the area to be annexed. A majority of voters must approve before the annexation may proceed.

## LU-4: Jurisdictional Limits and Annexation Boundaries



- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Raleigh City Limits                | <b>Annexation Boundary Agreements</b>   |  |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: lightbrown; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Short-Range Urban Service Area | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px; background-color: lightblue; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Cary | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px; background-color: green; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Knightdale        |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: darkbrown; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Long-Range Urban Service Area   | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px; background-color: orange; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Durham  | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px; background-color: yelloworange; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Rolesville |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: white; border: 2px solid black;"></span> Raleigh Jurisdiction Limit (ETJ)    | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px; background-color: red; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Garner     | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 2px; background-color: darkblue; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Wake Forest    |

ETJ: Extraterritorial Jurisdiction

## 3.4 Land Use and Transportation Coordination

Outside of Raleigh’s inner core—downtown and its adjacent neighborhoods—the majority of Raleigh’s populace lives, works, and socializes within an auto-dependent land use framework. To reduce vehicle miles traveled and improve air quality, Raleigh’s land use and transportation coordination policies focus on:

- Shortening trips.
- Encouraging pedestrian, bicycle, and transit-friendly communities.
- Directing density toward transit-rich mixed-use centers and corridors or areas adjacent and accessible to them via sidewalks, trails, or transit.
- Directing growth to less congested areas with development capacity.

### Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

Transit-oriented development (TOD) is defined as a moderate- to high-density mix of uses— such as residences, retail shops, offices, and civic and entertainment uses—located within one-half mile of a transit station and designed to support transit use. The typical “station area” is considered to be a half-mile radius, which is an acceptable 10-minute walking distance for most transit users if the area contains a destination, provides dedicated walking routes, and is safe and visually appealing. If a transit corridor contains a station once every mile, TOD could extend along the entire corridor with the highest densities and intensities of uses occurring near each station. Within the U.S., TOD is typically associated with rail transit; however, TOD could occur with other fixed guideway transit service, such as bus rapid transit, if it provides facilities and service levels similar to rail transit.

#### Policy LU 4.1 Coordinate Transportation Investments with Land Use

Ensure that transportation decisions, strategies, and investments are coordinated with and support the City’s land use objectives. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

#### Policy LU 4.2 Transportation in Support of Walkable Neighborhoods

Make the design and scale of transportation facilities compatible with planned land uses and with consideration for the character anticipated by this Comprehensive Plan for the surrounding neighborhood. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

#### Policy LU 4.3 Directing Transportation Investments

Target transportation facilities, services, and investments to promote and accommodate the growth this Comprehensive Plan anticipates in mixed-use centers, commercial corridors, and residential neighborhoods while reducing reliance on single-occupancy vehicles. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

#### Policy LU 4.4 Reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled Through Mixed Use

Promote mixed-use development that provides a range of services within a short distance of residences as a way to reduce the growth of vehicle miles traveled (VMT). (1, 3, 4, 5, 6)

#### Policy LU 4.5 Connectivity

New development and redevelopment should provide pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular connectivity between individual development sites to provide alternative means of access along corridors. (3, 4, 6) ●



## Wake County Transit Plan

The November 2016 passage of a half-percent sales tax increase to fund transit in Wake County set the stage for the largest expansion of transit in Raleigh's history. The tax increase will provide the bulk of the funding needed to implement the multibillion dollar Wake County Transit Plan, which will significantly broaden transportation options in the city. Commuter rail transit between Durham and Raleigh, a bus rapid transit (BRT) network spanning Cary and Raleigh, a frequent bus network serving Raleigh's urban core and inner-ring suburbs, and upgrades to frequency and coverage across the county are all planned for implementation by 2030.

The Wake County Transit Plan followed an intensive community conversation regarding the types of transit best suited to fulfilling the region's needs. It included a focused look at the trade-offs between considerations such as frequency, coverage, and infrastructure provision. In comparison to prior efforts, the plan represented a shift toward bus transit, although commuter rail remained a major element of the plan.

This large-scale transit implementation process requires close consideration of the relationship between transit and land use planning in Raleigh. While low-frequency transit is insufficient to influence development patterns, the types of transit and levels of service made possible by the new funding source will do so. This should be a mutually reinforcing relationship, with land use supporting higher levels of transit and, in turn, transit enables more focused development that maximizes the public's return on investment.

The presence and quality of transit plays a substantial role in shaping policy in Raleigh's 2030 Comprehensive Plan, from height and density to urban design. This guidance was revised following the adoption of the Wake County Transit Plan and the subsequent funding referendum in order to reflect the types of transit to be implemented. Changes included updates to maps and policies in the Land Use, Transportation, and Urban Design elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

Highlights of the Wake County Transit Plan include:

- A bus rapid transit (BRT) network aimed at improving the speed and quality of transit on selected corridors. Improvements will include dedicated bus lanes, traffic signal priority for buses, off-board fare payment, and raised platforms. Initial BRT corridors have been identified as New Bern Avenue, Capital Boulevard, Western Boulevard, and South Wilmington Street.
- A commuter rail corridor, using existing railroad tracks, reaching from Durham to Raleigh and south to Garner. The corridor would include multiple trips in each direction during peak hours, with stations in locations including downtown, N.C. State University, Cary, Morrisville, and Research Triangle Park.
- A substantially expanded frequent bus network, defined as having service at least every 15 minutes throughout the day. The Transit Plan envisions funding improvements that would increase the frequent network from 17 to 83 miles, covering all major destinations in the core of the city.



**Policy LU 4.6 Transit-Oriented Development**

Promote transit-oriented development around planned bus rapid transit (BRT) and potential fixed commuter rail stations through appropriate development regulation, education, station area planning, public-private partnerships, and regional cooperation. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

**Policy LU 4.7 Capitalizing on Transit Access**

Sites within a half-mile of planned and proposed bus rapid transit stations should be developed with intense residential and mixed uses to take full advantage of and support investment in transit infrastructure. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6) ●

**Policy LU 4.8 Station Area Land Uses**

A complementary mix of uses, including multifamily residential, offices, retail, civic, and entertainment uses, should be located within transit station areas. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6) ●

**Policy LU 4.9 Corridor Development**

Promote pedestrian-friendly and transit-supportive development patterns along multi-modal corridors designated on the Growth Framework Map, and any corridor programmed for “transit intensive” investments such as reduced headways, consolidated stops, and bus priority lanes and signals. (3, 4, 6)

**Policy LU 4.10 Development at Freeway Interchanges**

Development near freeway interchanges should cluster to create a node or nodes located at a nearby intersection of two streets, preferably classified two-lane avenue or higher, and preferably including a vertical and/or horizontal mix of uses. Development should be encouraged to build either frontage or access roads behind businesses to provide visibility to the business from the major street while limiting driveway connections to the major street. (4) ●

**Action LU 4.1 Reserved****Action LU 4.2 Reserved****Action LU 4.3 Station Area Plans**

Prioritize and prepare station area plans to guide development patterns within one-half mile of identified regional and local fixed guideway transit stops.

See also Element B: ‘Transportation’ for additional policies and actions related to land use and transportation coordination and transit development including recommendations of the Wake County Transit Plan and the Special Transit Advisory Committee (STAC).

## 3.5 Land Use Compatibility

During the past decade, development and redevelopment within already built-up areas has made up a greater share of total development activity within Raleigh. New growth and infill development has occurred throughout the City, and sometimes had the unintended consequences of negatively affecting adjacent land uses with shadows, noise, light, glare, vibration, odors, and other nuisances due to incompatible height, bulk, or intensity of use.

The Future Land Use map has been developed by considering existing land use patterns, development trends, transportation corridors, and the compatibility of existing and future uses. However, in order to accommodate appropriate densities in areas designated for transit investment and mixed-use development within the context of 60 years of low-density suburban growth, there are many areas where higher-intensity future land use categories abut areas intended to be conserved or developed at lower densities or intensity. The Unified Development Ordinance, approved since the initial 2009 publication of this Plan, provides a regulatory framework, including required transition zones and buffers between areas of higher and lower intensities, and between mixed-use and residential properties. The following policies and actions are meant to supplement the Future Land Use Map to ensure that future land uses do not negatively affect existing land uses, and that appropriate transitions are provided between land uses of differing intensity. These policies, particularly those that call for zoning regulations to achieve land use compatibility, have informed and are codified in the Unified Development Ordinance.

### Policy LU 5.1 Reinforcing the Urban Pattern

New development should acknowledge existing buildings, and, more generally, the surrounding area. Quality design and site planning is required so that new development opportunities within the existing urban fabric of Raleigh are implemented without adverse impacts on local character and appearance. (3, 4, 6) ●

### Policy LU 5.2 Managing Commercial Development Impacts

Manage new commercial development using zoning regulations and through the conditional use zoning and development review processes so that it does not result in unreasonable and unexpected traffic, parking, litter, shadow, view obstruction, odor, noise, and vibration impacts on surrounding residential areas. (3, 4, 6)

### Policy LU 5.3 Institutional Uses

Ensure that when institutional uses, such as private schools, child care facilities, and similar uses are permitted in residential neighborhoods, they are designed and operated in a manner that is sensitive to neighborhood issues and that maintains quality of life. Encourage institutions and neighborhoods to work proactively to address issues such as traffic and parking, hours of operation, outside use of facilities, and facility expansion. (1, 3, 6)

### Policy LU 5.4 Density Transitions

Low- to medium-density residential development and/or low-impact office uses should serve as transitional densities between lower-density neighborhoods and more intensive commercial and residential uses. Where two areas designated for significantly different development intensity abut on the Future Land Use Map, the implementing zoning should ensure that the appropriate transition occurs on the site with the higher intensity. (1, 3, 6) ●

### Policy LU 5.5 Transitional and Buffer Zone Districts

Maintain and enhance zoning districts which serve as transitional or buffer areas between residential and commercial districts and which also may contain institutional, non-profit, and office-type uses. Zoning regulations and conditions for these areas should ensure that development achieves appropriate height and density transitions, and protects neighborhood character. (1, 3, 6)

### Policy LU 5.6 Buffering Requirements

New development adjacent to areas of lower intensity should provide effective physical buffers to avoid adverse effects. Buffers may include larger setbacks, landscaped or forested strips, transition zones, fencing, screening, height and/or density step downs, and other architectural and site planning measures that avoid potential conflicts. (See Text Box: Transitions Defined) (1, 3, 6) ●

### Policy LU 5.7 Building Height Transitions

When a mixed-use or nonresidential area contemplated for building heights in excess of seven stories abuts an area designated for low or moderate density on the future land use map, building heights should not exceed a 45-degree plane starting 10' from the adjoining lower density area. When any mixed-use or non-residential area is separated from an area of low- or moderate-density by an intervening street other than a Major Street, building faces along the frontage facing the residential area should not exceed three stories.

### Action LU 5.1 Reserved

### Action LU 5.2 Reserved

### Action LU 5.3 Reserved

## Transitions Defined

Successful transitions mitigate incompatibilities between adjacent and nearby land uses. Incompatibilities arise when nearby uses differ significantly in terms of intensity, height, and/or bulk. Tools such as change in scale, attention to architectural detail, increase in landscaping quantity, distance between buildings or uses, and compatible height can allow successful transitions between properties with dissimilar characteristics. Where the incompatibility arises from use, an intermediate intervening use can serve as a buffer. The Unified Development Ordinance provides Neighborhood Transition Zone requirements for mixed-use properties that abut low-density residential uses.

The following list defines appropriate parameters for successful transitions:

- *Higher intensity commercial uses are appropriately buffered from low to moderate density residential areas through an intervening area of low-intensity office or medium- to high-density residential use.*
- *Building design can successfully transition by utilizing a multidimensional façade that mitigates the height of a building. A taller building can utilize increased setbacks and/or stepbacks to soften the building mass and create a compatible street wall.*
- *A transition in height should consist of a combination of distance and height that allows access to light and air; and can be achieved through a combination of height limits, setbacks, and/or stepbacks.*
- *Additional landscaping measures beyond existing landscape ordinance requirements may be needed to buffer certain use combinations.*

## 3.6 Mixed-Use Development

The resurgence of mixed-use downtowns, employment centers, and retail centers is a national development trend that is evident in Raleigh in such areas as downtown, North Hills, and Forestville Village Center. Mixed-use centers bring together medium- to high-density residential and nonresidential uses within a walkable, bicycle-friendly, and/or transit-accessible development framework. Uses can be mixed vertically, within buildings; or horizontally, when tightly clustered in a pedestrian-friendly arrangement. Due to the diversity of uses and activities, mixed-use centers are typically vibrant destinations that attract attention due to their level of activity. Fundamentally, a mixed-use center should provide a full service environment and diverse land uses—residences, offices, retail, service, entertainment, civic, and open space—for residents, employees, and visitors.

### Policy LU 6.1 Composition of Mixed-Use Centers

Mixed-use centers should comprise a variety of integrated residential and commercial uses - mixed both vertically and horizontally - that have well-planned public spaces that bring people together and provide opportunities for active living and interaction. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

### Policy LU 6.2 Complementary Land Uses and Urban Vitality

A complementary integration and mixture of land uses should be provided within all growth centers and mixed-use centers to maintain the City's livability, manage future growth, and provide walkable and transit accessible destinations. Areas designated for mixed-use development in the Comprehensive Plan should be zoned consistently with this policy. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

### Policy LU 6.3 Mixed-Use and Multi-Modal Transportation

Promote the development of mixed-use activity centers with multi-modal transportation connections to provide convenient access by means other than car to residential and employment areas. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

### Policy LU 6.4 Bus Stop Dedication

The City shall coordinate the dedication of land for the construction of bus stop facilities within mixed-use centers on bus lines as part of the development review and zoning process. (3, 4, 6) ●

### Action LU 6.1 Reserved



## 3.7 Commercial Districts and Corridors

As Raleigh annexed land and grew outward over the last 20 years, new residential and commercial development followed and often left behind underutilized commercial areas and maturing neighborhoods. The revitalization of Raleigh's commercial districts and corridors is a primary issue for the City due to their positive or negative influence on an area's development potential, adjacent property values, and gateway aesthetics in and out of the City. Raleigh's commercial districts and corridors hold great potential for "capturing" future residential and commercial demand and for providing viable transit options.

### Policy LU 7.1 Encouraging Nodal Development

Discourage auto-oriented commercial "strip" development and instead encourage pedestrian-oriented "nodes" of commercial development at key locations along major corridors. Zoning and design standards should ensure that the height, mass, and scale of development within nodes respects the integrity and character of surrounding residential areas and does not unreasonably impact them. (1, 3, 4, 5, 6) ●

### Policy LU 7.2 Shopping Center Reuse

Promote the redevelopment of aging and high vacancy shopping centers into mixed-use developments with housing, commercial, and public recreation facilities. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

### Policy LU 7.3 Single-Family Lots on Major Streets

No new single-family residential lots should have direct vehicular access from major streets, in an effort to minimize traffic impacts and preserve the long-term viability of these residential uses when located adjacent to major streets. (3, 4) ●



### Policy LU 7.4 Scale and Design of New Commercial Uses

New uses within commercial districts should be developed at a height, mass, scale, and design that is appropriate and compatible with surrounding areas. (3, 6) ●

### Policy LU 7.5 High-Impact Commercial Uses

Ensure that the City's zoning regulations limit the location and proliferation of fast food restaurants, sexually-oriented businesses, late night alcoholic beverage establishments, 24-hour mini-marts and convenience stores, and similar high impact commercial establishments that generate excessive late night activity, noise, or otherwise affect the quality of life in nearby residential neighborhoods. (3, 6)

### Policy LU 7.6 Pedestrian-Friendly Development

New and redeveloped commercial and mixed-use developments should be pedestrian-friendly. (4, 5, 6) ●

Action LU 7.1 **Reserved**

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Action LU 7.2 **Reserved**

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Action LU 7.3 **Promoting Commercial  
Reinvestment**

Identify incentives and other economic development tools to promote reinvestment in under performing commercial corridors.

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*See also Element D: 'Economic Development' for additional corridor development and revitalization policies and actions.*

## 3.8 Neighborhood Conservation and Development

One of Raleigh's major assets is its tree-lined, historic residential neighborhoods and street-car suburbs within and adjacent to downtown Raleigh. The City also has a number of historic districts. The inner-ring suburbs of the 1950s and 1960s are also well-regarded due to their housing stock, mature trees, and connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods and shopping centers. The outer-ring suburbs of the last generation contain more auto-dependent residential neighborhoods that lack connectivity. However, more recent developments are applying the design principles of early- and mid-20th century neighborhoods with better connectivity to shopping centers, schools, parks, and open space. The City of Raleigh desires to maintain and conserve its historic residential neighborhoods, maintain and reinvest in its aging inner-ring residential neighborhoods, adapt more recent residential neighborhoods for greater connectivity, guide infill development, and promote traditional neighborhood development (TND) patterns for new residential developments. Two important tools for preserving neighborhood character are the Historic Overlay District (HOD) and the Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District (NCOD), which provide for neighborhood-specific zoning standards and, in the case of the HOD, design standards.



### Policy LU 8.1 Housing Variety

Accommodate growth in newly developing areas of the City through mixed-use neighborhoods with a variety of housing types. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

### Policy LU 8.2 Neighborhood Revitalization

Facilitate neighborhood revitalization and stabilization by focusing grants, loans, housing rehabilitation efforts, commercial investment programs, capital improvements, and other government actions in those areas that are most in need. Use social, economic, and physical indicators such as the poverty rate, the number of abandoned or substandard buildings, the crime rate, and the unemployment rate as key indicators of need. (2, 3, 6)

### Policy LU 8.3 Conserving, Enhancing, and Revitalizing Neighborhoods

Recognize the importance of balancing the need to increase the housing supply and expand neighborhood commerce with the parallel need to protect neighborhood character, preserve historic resources, and restore the environment. (2, 3, 6)

**Policy LU 8.4 Rehabilitation Before Demolition**

In redeveloping areas characterized by vacant, abandoned, and underutilized older buildings, generally encourage rehabilitation and adaptive use of existing buildings rather than demolition. (3, 6)

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**Policy LU 8.5 Conservation of Single-Family Neighborhoods**

Protect and conserve the City's single-family neighborhoods and ensure that their zoning reflects their established low-density character. Carefully manage the development of vacant land and the alteration of existing structures in and adjacent to single-family neighborhoods to protect low-density character, preserve open space, and maintain neighborhood scale. (2, 3,6).

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**Policy LU 8.6 Teardowns**

Discourage the replacement of quality homes in good physical condition with new homes that are substantially larger, taller, and bulkier than the prevailing building stock. (3, 6)

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**Policy LU 8.7 Flag Lots**

Generally discourage the use of “flag lots” (lots with little or no street frontage, accessed by a driveway easement or narrow strip of land, and typically located to the rear of another lot) when subdividing residential property. (3, 6)

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**Policy LU 8.8 Finer-Grained Development**

Large oversized blocks in new neighborhoods and subdivisions should be avoided in favor of smaller blocks and enhanced pedestrian networks that create better connections and help facilitate walking and reduce driving. (3, 4, 5, 6) ●

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**Policy LU 8.9 Open Space in New Development**

New residential development should be developed with common and usable open space that preserves the natural landscape and the highest quality ecological resources on the site. (5, 6) ●

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**Policy LU 8.10 Infill Development**

Encourage infill development on vacant land within the City, particularly in areas where there are vacant lots that create “gaps” in the urban fabric and detract from the character of a commercial or residential street. Such development should complement the established character of the area and should not create sharp changes in the physical development pattern. (3, 6) ●

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**Policy LU 8.11 Development of Vacant Sites**

Facilitate the development of vacant lots that have historically been difficult to develop due to infrastructure or access problems, inadequate lot dimensions, fragmented or absentee ownership, or other constraints. Explore lot consolidation, acquisition, and other measures that would address these. (3, 6)

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**Policy LU 8.12 Infill Compatibility**

Vacant lots and infill sites within existing neighborhoods should be developed consistently with the design elements of adjacent structures, including height, setbacks, and massing through the use of zoning tools including Neighborhood Conservation Overlay Districts. (3, 6) ●

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### Policy LU 8.13 **Traditional Neighborhood Development**

Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) and planning for large undeveloped sites within the City's municipal boundaries to improve neighborhood and street connectivity. Traditional Neighborhood Development is an urban form characterized by compact, pedestrian-oriented design, which provides a variety of uses and diverse housing types within easy walking distance, and is anchored by a central public space and civic activity (school, library, church, or similar institution). (2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

### Policy LU 8.14 **Student-Oriented Housing**

Encourage student-oriented housing, including fraternities, sororities, dormitories and rent-by-the-room, multi-bedroom apartments, to locate in the area immediately adjacent to colleges/ universities, in transit-oriented development areas, or in downtown. (2, 3, 4, 6) ●

### Policy LU 8.15 **Accessory Dwelling Units**

Provide for and regulate Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) with zoning and overlay regulations that ensure compatibility with surrounding contexts while expanding housing options for Raleigh's residents. (2,3,4,5)

### Action LU 8.1 **Reserved**

### Action LU 8.2 **Reserved**

### Action LU 8.3 **Reserved**

### Action LU 8.4 **Reserved**

### Action LU 8.5 **Reserved**

*See also Element J: 'Historic Preservation' for additional policies and actions related to neighborhood conservation.*

## 3.9 Research and Development/ Institutional Land Uses

Raleigh is well-known regionally and nationally for its level of excellence in colleges and universities, research and development industries, and hospital research and care. However, since these public and private institutions and industries often have large campus settings, their future growth and expansion could affect adjacent residential neighborhoods. Due to their contribution to the City's economic and social fabric, Raleigh wants to encourage additional institutional growth while protecting existing neighborhoods through proactive planning and communication. Map LU-5 identifies the primary Research and Development and Institutional land uses in the City.

### Policy LU 9.1 Planning for the Tech Sector

Plan for and designate adequate land for offices, laboratories, business incubators, and flex space buildings to accommodate Raleigh's growing technology industries on the Future Land Use Map. (1, 3)

### Policy LU 9.2 Coordinating Institutional Growth

Expand and encourage partnerships among the City's many large institutions to coordinate future growth and development of these institutions with surrounding land uses and neighborhoods. (1, 3, 6)

### Policy LU 9.3 Hospitals

Plan for and designate adequate land for the equitable distribution of hospitals and their facilities throughout the City on the Future Land Use Map. (1, 3, 6)

### Policy LU 9.4 Health Care Industry

Support the continued growth and expansion of the City's health care providers to serve the needs of Raleigh's residents. (1, 3, 6)

### Action LU 9.1 Reserved

### Action LU 9.2 Reserved

### Action LU 9.3 Reserved

## 3.10 Retail Land Uses

Raleigh's retail uses are primarily located within mixed-use centers—such as downtown Raleigh, North Hills, and Crabtree Valley—and along commercial corridors. In addition to its core, Downtown Raleigh contains a number of mixed-use districts—the Warehouse District, Seaboard Station and Glenwood Avenue—that provide an expanding base of local retail goods and services and limited national retailers. Cameron Village is one of the first retail shopping centers built in this country after WWII, and offers a strong and diverse mix of local and national retailers in a pedestrian-friendly environment. North Hills is the location of Raleigh's first enclosed retail shopping mall, built with large national department stores to anchor smaller national and local retailers. North Hills is now a pedestrian-oriented lifestyle center with a greater mix of office and residential uses. Crabtree Valley, Raleigh's second and larger enclosed shopping mall, is also undergoing a transformation into a more mixed-use center, and is attracting more residential uses through infill development. Triangle Town Center is Raleigh's most recently built enclosed retail shopping mall. Additional retail uses are located along the Hillsborough and Person Street corridors. The remainder of Raleigh's retail uses are located in commercial shopping centers along the City's major streets. Raleigh's retail policies focus on strengthening its current mixed-use centers, encouraging retail uses within new pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use centers, and minimizing the impact of auto-oriented commercial retail uses.

Most of Raleigh's residents must drive to access retail services, even for daily convenience needs. In order to minimize automobile dependency and to improve accessibility to retail services, the development of small commercial hubs is encouraged within and adjacent to established residential neighborhoods. Such retail uses should be low-intensity and compatible with their contexts.

### Policy LU 10.1 Mixed-Use Retail

Encourage new retail development in mixed-use developments. (3, 4)

### Policy LU 10.2 Retail in Industrial Zones

Discourage retail uses in industrial zones to maintain viable industrial areas and avoid an oversupply of retail uses. (1,3)

### Policy LU 10.3 Ancillary Retail Uses

Ancillary retail uses in residential and office developments located in areas designated High Density Residential, Office and Residential Mixed Use and Office/Research and Development should not be larger in size than appropriate to serve primarily the residents, employees, visitors, and patrons of the primary uses in the area; should preferably be located within a mixed-use building; and should be sited to minimize adverse traffic, noise, and visual impacts on adjoining residential areas. (3, 4) ●

### Policy LU 10.4 Siting of Regional Retail

Regional retail uses—including big box stores, power centers, and regional malls—should be located where access is available from at least two roadways providing a minimum of four lanes each. Access should be obtained from both roadways. (3, 4) ●

### Policy LU 10.5 Regional Retail and Residential Areas

Regional retail uses should not be located adjacent to areas designated for Low- to Moderate-Density Residential use on the Zoning Map or Future Land Use Map, or areas currently developed for such. (3,4) ●

### Policy LU 10.6 **Retail Nodes**

Retail uses should concentrate in mixed-use centers rather than spreading along major streets in a linear “strip” pattern unless ancillary to office or high-density residential use. (3, 4) ●

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### Policy LU 10.7 **Micro-Retail**

Within a strong regulatory framework, encourage small commercial hubs within and adjacent to established residential neighborhoods to improve non-automobile access to retail services.

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### Action LU 10.1 **Reserved**

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*See also Element D: ‘Economic Development’ for additional policies related to retail and economic development.*



## 3.11 Industrial Land Uses

Industrial uses occupy approximately 3,600 acres or 3.7 percent of the City’s jurisdiction. These uses are typically concentrated along rail corridors and the roads that run parallel to them, with some corresponding to warehousing and distribution areas adjacent to interstate highways, such as the area off of the I-40 interchange with Jones Sausage Road in southeast Raleigh. While only 3.7 percent of the City’s jurisdiction is occupied by industrial uses, over 10 percent of the land is zoned for industrial uses (Industrial Mixed Use and Heavy Industrial). The majority of industrially-zoned lands are developed with office or retail uses, which are currently permitted as-of-right within industrial zoning districts. The Comprehensive Plan text and the Future Land Use Map address the location, zoning, and compatibility aspects of Raleigh’s industrial areas.

### Policy LU 11.1 Preserving Industrial Land

Support land use policies that protect competitive opportunities to locate industrial, flex, and warehouse sites near major transportation corridors and the airport. (1, 4)

### Policy LU 11.2 Location of Industrial Areas

Accommodate industrial uses—including municipal public works facilities—in areas that are well buffered from residential uses (and other sensitive uses such as schools), easily accessed from major roads and railroads, and characterized by existing concentrations of industrial uses. Such areas are generally designated as “General Industrial” on the Future Land Use Map. (3, 4, 6)

### Policy LU 11.3 Commercial Uses in Industrial Areas

Limit specified non-industrial uses in industrially zoned areas, including office and retail development, in order to preserve these areas for industrial development. (1)

### Policy LU 11.4 Rezoning/Development of Industrial Areas

Allow the rezoning and/or redevelopment of industrial land for non-industrial purposes when the land can no longer viably support industrial activities or is located such that industry is not consistent with the Future Land Use Map. Examples include land in the immediate vicinity of planned transit stations. (1, 3)

### Policy LU 11.5 Mitigating Industrial Land Use Impacts

Mitigate the adverse impacts created by industrial uses through a variety of measures, including buffering, site planning and design, strict environmental controls, performance standards, and the use of a range of industrial zones that reflect the varying impacts of different kinds of industrial uses. (6)

### Policy LU 11.6 Brownfields

Identify incentives and other economic development tools to promote remediation of and reinvestment in formerly industrial properties.

### Action LU 11.1 Reserved

### Action LU 11.2 Reserved

## 3.12 Large Site Development

The City's Future Land Use Map will guide the future development of Raleigh, with the exception of "Special Study Areas." These areas will be treated separately due to their large size, unknown market potentials, environmental constraints, or other significant land use variables. Examples include areas within or near quarries and large undeveloped areas adjacent to the City's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction. Raleigh's policies on the development of large sites provide a mechanism for planned and orderly growth. Map LU-3 identifies those large sites for which the policies contained herein are pertinent.

### Policy LU 12.1 Planning Process for Large Sites

Ensure the appropriate development of large sites proposed for redevelopment within Raleigh through visioning, design workshops, special studies, and iterative public involvement processes that build consensus as part of the site's special study process. (3, 6)

### Policy LU 12.2 Large Sites Outside the ETJ

Ensure the appropriate development of large sites outside of Raleigh's current ETJ boundaries but within its USA boundaries—such as the City-owned Randleigh Farm property—through special studies to determine potential future land uses and impacts on City revenues and services. (1, 3, 5, 6)

### Policy LU 12.3 Reservations for Community Facilities

Plans for large sites should identify park and community facility needs and reserve appropriate portions of the site for schools, parks, public safety buildings, and other facilities. (3, 4, 6) ●

### Policy LU 12.4 Community Involvement and Special Study Areas

Engage the public and adjacent property owners in all special study area deliberations, meetings, and actions that could affect an area's future land uses. (1, 3, 6)

### Policy LU 12.5 Dix Property Planning

Encourage the development of an iconic, beautiful, sustainable Dorothea Dix Park that is integrated into and supports the City's community, ecology and economy, by engaging the public, private, and non-profit sectors, including the Dix Park Conservancy.

### Action LU 12.1 Reserved

### Action LU 12.2 Dix Property Acquisition

### Action LU 12.3 Dix Property Plan

Engage in a public planning process for the 80 acres of existing structures and 226 acres of open space.